

Message Text

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45

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 AID-20 IGA-02 MC-02 ACDA-19 EB-11

COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 IO-12 RSR-01 GAC-01 /169 W

----- 019771

R 260900 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7770

INFO AMCONSUL LUANDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1052

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ESTC, PO

SUBJECT: B-26 S IN ANGOLA

REF: STATE 050187

1. CHARGE DELIVERED NOTE CONCERNING B-26 S TO FONMIN
DIRGEN POLITICAL AFFAIRS CALDEIRA COELHO MARCH 23
DRAWING ON POINTS MADE BY DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS TO
AMBASSADOR THEMIDO.

2. CALDEIRA COELHO REPEATED THEMIDO' S REACTION THAT
GOP SURPRISED AT U. S. CONTINUED INTEREST IN THIS
MATTER AND THAT GOP DID NOT FEEL ITSELF RESPONSIBLE
FOR AIRCRAFT ILLEGAL EXPORT SINCE THEY HAD DEALT
THROUGH LEGITIMATE SWISS CONCERN. GOP, HE CLAIMED,
WAS NOT EVEN AWARE WHERE PLANES WERE LOCATED WHEN
PURCHASE ARRANGED.

3. CHARGE SUGGESTED THAT SOMEONE IN OFFICIAL CAPACITY,
AT LEAST IN PAF, HAD KNOWN AT THE TIME WHERE THE
AIRCRAFT WERE COMING FROM SINCE PAF OFFICERS HAD
ASSISTED FERRY PILOT IN OBTAINING RETURN PASSAGE TO
U. S. AND HAD ALSO FACILITATED CLEARANCE OF B-26' S
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TRANSITING SANTA MARIA. CHARGE NOTED THAT WHATEVER PAST HISTORY OF CASE WAS, FACT REMAINED THAT PRESENCE OF B-26' S IN ANGOLA NOW COULD BE USED BY THOSE WHO ARE OPPOSED TO FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND U. S., REFERRING IN THIS CONNECTION TO THE APPROACHING OSLO CONFERENCE AND THE HEARINGS NOW UNDER WAY IN THE HOUSE SUB- COMMITTEE ON AFRICA. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOP WOULD RECOGNIZE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH U. S. VIEWS THIS MATTER AND TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT THE ISSUE FROM BECOMING AN IRRITANT IN OUR RELATIONS.

4. CALDEIRA COELHO NOTED THAT HE FELT B-26 PURCHASE HAD BEEN A BAD BUY FROM MANY POINTS OF VIEW INCLUDING FACT IT TOOK SO MANY YEARS TO REPAIR THEN AND EVEN TODAY THEY WERE BARELY FLYABLE. HE FELT IN FACT THAT THEY WERE NOT OF GREAT USE IN ANGOLA. CHARGE SUGGESTED THAT THIS PRESENTED ANOTHER GOOD REASON FOR THEIR REMOVAL FROM ANGOLA: THEIR MARGINAL UTILITY WOULD NOT SEEM TO JUSTIFY THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL DAMAGE THEY REPRESENT.

5. CALDEIRA COELHO CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT GOP WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE ITSELF TO U. S. WISHES IN THIS MATTER AND THAT HE EXPECTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE THAT HE WOULD HAVE SOME DECISION TO CONVEY.

6. COMMENT: I HAD DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT CALDEIRA COELHO DID NOT HAVE HIS HEART IN THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE PORTUGUESE POSITION AND HE LEFT ME WITH THE FEELING THAT GOP WILL PROBABLY AND FAIRLY SOON ACCEDE TO U. S. DESIRES THAT AIRCRAFT BE RETURNED TO METROPOLE.
POST

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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